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Minutes 12-09-10

Coalition Meeting Minutes December 9, 2010 5:30-7:00

Present: John Scheft, Chief Ryan, Jack Flood, Natasha Waden, Carlene Newell, Detective Gallagher, Cindy Sheridan, Christine Connolly, Rebecca Wolfe, Kathy Hirsch, Ethel Doyle, Rebecca Meehan, Brian Dietz, Cindy Starks, Diana Weisner, Captain Bongiorno, Lynn Horgan, Colleen Leger

Welcome: Colleen invited new and current Coalition members to enjoy Holiday fare and expressed gratitude for the efforts of the past year.

Introductions: Colleen welcomed the following individuals to the meeting:

Rebecca Wolfe: Arlington is one of nine communities awarded a Department of Mental Health (DMH) grant. This grant allowed the APD to hire Rebecca as a Police Department Social Worker. Captain Bongiorno stated that she has been a welcomed addition and offers professional training to address community needs around issues such as mental health, domestic violence and crisis intervention. It is expected that this position will enhance police effectiveness, court diversion, intervention and community based services. *Rebecca Meehan-* Is the Teen Librarian at the Robbins/Fox Library. Rebecca informed the group of multiple programs being offered that are suited to teen youth. These include: Glee Night 12/29 for 6-12th grades with a pianist at the Fox, Dr. Who mini marathon. Website has list of programs. *Diana Weisner-* Is the Executive Director of the Arlington Enrichment Collaborative based at the Ottoson Middle School (OMS) which was co-founded by Coalition member Cindy Starks four years ago. This program offers a wide variety of enrichment opportunities for middle and high school students. Programs include: live action role play (LARP), sports, arts, enrichment and teen nights at the Senior Center. Diana mentioned the program works hard to obtain grants and has recently submitted a grant with Mt. Auburn Hospital and the Coalition to develop a tobacco prevention peer leadership program among middle school students. *Lynn Horgan-* Has been a coalition member since 2006 and will fulfill the position of Coalition Project Coordinator.

Upcoming Events:

SADD Day: Presentation is scheduled for Wednesday 12/15/10 at AHS during the 2nd & 3rd periods. This presentation will feature educator and athletic coach Peter DeBasio who is a powerful and dynamic speaker dedicated to educating youth about substance use avoidance, and how alcohol and other drugs affect the developing brain. Captain Bongiorno and Cindy Sheridan recommended this speaker after hearing his presentation at an Arlington Catholic parent and athletic youth event. Cindy will forward contact information to Jack Flood who expressed interest for the Middle School.

Social Media Strategy Webinar: This is happening on Wednesday 12/15 at 2:30.

Topic: Understanding and developing a social media strategy for non-profit organizations. Cindy, John and Diana expressed interest in this event aimed at increasing awareness of Facebook, Constant Contact (e-newsletters), blogging, Tweating etc.

Michael Thompson Presentation: Wed. 12/15 at Watertown Middle School 6:30-8:30. Topic: Best Friends, Worst Enemies: Understanding the Social Lives of Children.

Highrock Church's 4th Annual Christmas Benefit Concert: Will be offered 12/11-12/12 for multiple shows.

Proceeds will raise funds for the Arlington Safety Net for families in crisis and towards funding a case manager program. This will allow expansion of services and increase care coordination around youth and family mental

health, domestic violence prevention, and near-homelessness interventions. Colleen expressed thanks to Brian Dietz –Youth Pastor at Highrock for their efforts to fund this case manager position. A church member and social worker will work with the Arlington Youth Counseling Center (AYCC) as a case manager beginning in the new year.

Coalition Updates:

YRBS: This was last administered at the OMS in May 09'. It will be administered in May 11' for increased consistency and truer year-to-year comparisons. Topics such as Perception of Peer Behavior, Bullying, Gambling, Sleep, Nutrition and unsupervised time alone during the day, were areas discussed by coalition members as areas to add, revise or consider in next YRBS. Subcommittee will address these topics as well as discussions about cross tabs and scantron sheets.

Diversion/Enforcement: Cindy reported on the positive ways this program is establishing roots and growing in process and communication with schools, agencies/court system. Chief Ryan mentioned the Middlesex DA Diversion Program sent a letter to local Police Chiefs informing them of the progress made towards a countywide, pre-complaint Juvenile Diversion Program. The letter also acknowledged the work of the Arlington Diversion program.

Marijuana Law: Currently the state fine for marijuana is \$100.00 and the town bylaw is \$300 for consumption. Bryan acknowledged that there are enforcement issues with this. Colleen stated that she met with Senator Donnelly about the problem and educated him on the marijuana diversion program, which has no leverage without a fine to waive. Sen. Donnelly suggested contacting Senator Tolman's office and reframing the issue to deliver the information from communities/youth services/coalitions rather than from Chiefs of Police. Discussion ensued around legislative control on the issue with John and Chief Ryan offering perspectives to consider.

CHNA Youth Working Group: Colleen informed that she and Lynn have attended several meetings. It seems likely that RFP's will be offered (\$15,000-20,000 per year, maybe for 2 years). The target will be for middle/high school student programming around direct service, assessments and for building collaborations. Additionally, ~\$50,000 will be allocated towards policy development.

Tobacco Prevention: As mentioned earlier by Diana, the Coalition has partnered with the AEC and Mt. Auburn to submit a grant to develop a tobacco prevention peer leadership program at the Arlington Enrichment Collaborative. The students enrolled in the Peer Leadership project will be given information about the actual number of peers who do not use tobacco products, the new tobacco products on the market and training on media literacy. The program will also focus on public speaking and leadership skills training. Armed with these tools, the Peer Leaders will be positioned to lead a social norms campaign. Carlene informed group that another very successful partnership is underway. Chris Britt is an Arlington resident, recent college graduate and magician who approached Carlene regarding getting the message out about smoking with the incorporation of magic. Program was developed with Carlene and Chris scheduled to visit 3-5th grade at all Elementary schools.

Other News: DEA used its emergency scheduling authority to temporarily control five chemicals found in synthetic marijuana products (e.g. "spice" and "K2"), making the possession and/or sales of these products illegal for at least one year.

Continuation Grant Application (due in February): Grant goals moving forward will be to reassess stated goals to address problem behaviors, develop an action plan, set goals, develop activities and strategies to effect change. Goals for this 5th year:

- Increase range and frequency of cross-sector collaboration
- Reduce underage drinking parties
- Reduce adult drinking at youth events
- Reduce illegal youth accessibility to prescription medications
- Increase consistent police enforcement of youth substance use violations/public drinking laws

